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ABSTRACT

Individualized instruction is an important tool in mainstreaming special needs students in industrial arts, as experience has shown. Important steps toward meeting these needs include (1) making an individualized assessment of each student, of student needs, and of the present state of student accomplishments; and (2) developing an individualized educational plan (IEP), wherein needs are related to course goals and objectives and provision is made for measurement of success. One step beyond the IEP for special needs students would be an IEP for every student. This approach was adopted for a junior high general metals program. Course objectives were written into class projects that provided a logical progression of learning. Lists of "prescriptions" that ranged in level of difficulty were made for every project such that student demonstration of a certain level of mastery exempted the individual from written work requirements. Students were able to use self-corrected tests to measure their progress. The approach enabled the class to meet the intent as well as the letter of the law on mainstreaming of special needs students and allowed students to tailor learning events to suit themselves. (The appendix contains a set of questions which can help determine appropriate individualized programs for special needs students.) (CP)

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INDUSTRIAL ARTS DIVISION

GENERAL SESSION B

THEME: SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

TOPIC II: "MEETING THE NEEDS OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS THROUGH INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION"

by

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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"Karen paused to figure how she was going to make it over the three-quarter-inch-high doorsill and into the foyer where a large 'Welcome Home Karen!' sign was strung across the wall. She rested her left shoulder against the door jamb and placed her right crutch over the sill. That didn't seem to work, however, so she shifted her position.

"'Come-on, Karen, you can do it.' the other children called encouragingly. Karen looked up at her new brothers and sisters, half of whom sported crutches of their own, and gave a determined push. It was 1972, and Karen had just entered her new home on her own two feet. Artificial feet it is true, but nevertheless, her own.

"Karen, when asked what she likes best about herself, she replies, 'I can do anything.'" (Levin, 1979, p. 6).

"Each state and Local Education Agency shall insure that an individualized education program is provided for each handicapped child who is receiving or will receive special education, regardless of what institution or agency provides or will provide special education to the child." If there is any field within our general school curriculum that can and does take into consideration differences between students, it is industrial arts.

Very briefly, an outlined procedure for accomplishing the development of an individualized approach for each

student is as follows:

1. Identify and refer those students who have special needs.
2. Select an assessment team.
3. Decide who is responsible for collecting the needed information on the special needs student.
4. Decide what kinds of information are required to obtain a "true" reflection of the special needs student.
5. Decide when the information will be collected, and how it will be collected. (Some examples of the "how" include: 1) determining entry level performance by observing the student; 2) interviewing previous instructors, parents, and other appropriate personnel; and 3) reviewing the student's record.
6. Collect all of this information.
7. Develop a performance statement of where the student is at this time.
8. Deliver the material that has been collected to each member of the Assessment Team for their individual recommendations.
9. Develop a collective statement - which is made by the assesment team as a group - as to the current performance of the student.

Once this task is completed, an Individualized Educational Program, or an Individualized Educational Plan, or an Individualized Vocational Plan, or - as I prefer to call it - an Individualized Subject Plan is designed. Within this ISP: 1) the needs of the special needs student must be determined in relation to the goals and objectives of the course, as well as any special resources; and 2) the measurement of student success must be determined, as well as how it will be reviewed.

The major divisions of the Individualized Subject Plan include : 1) a statement of the student's current level of performance; 2) a listing of long range goals, and short term objectives; 3) a listing of all special services that may be required; 4) a description of the criteria that will be used; and 5) a schedule which will be utilized in progress evaluation. This Individualized Subject Plan should be developed by a team of individuals which include: 1) the student's instructor; 2) a representative from the administration; 3) at least one, but hopefully both parents; 4) the special needs student; and 5) any additional individuals who will be providing any of the special services that will be needed by the student.

All of this may sound familiar to you. The only problem is that if we fulfill everything that I have mentioned thus far, we are still NOT meeting the intent of the law. The underlying and undeniable purpose of this law is to MAINSTREAM certain special needs students - take them out

from the single room where all special needs students are in one group, and instead, incorporate them into the main stream of education. However, if they are the only students in a classroom who are utilizing Individualized Subject Plans, while all other students in the classroom are a part of a "normal" lecture/demonstration environment, then these special needs students are still segregated. A strong possible solution is to provide EVERY student with an Individualized Subject Plan.

Let's begin by taking a look at Individualized Instruction Programs. A finished program will permit ANY student to start at a level at which his present ability and achievement indicate that he is functioning. As you know, there are quite a few of these individualized instruction programs in existance. I was faced with the same problem when I decided to individualize the general metals program when I was teaching in a junior high school. There were so many programs - and they were all slightly different. There were some programs I really liked, but just could not adapt to my personal teaching situation. My wife and I spent many hours reviewing literature concerning the various individualized instruction programs.

The program that most closely resembled what I intended to accomplish was the Individually Prescribed Instruction program which was developed at the University of Pittsburgh. However, I had to make several changes in order to have even this program fulfill the requirements and confinements of the

laboratory and the school system where I was employed. Objectives were first written for the course and arranged in an orderly sequence so that the students could progress quickly with little overlap or repitition. Projects were selected that included the objectives. These projects served two purposes: 1) an interest factor; and 2) a method of determining a logical progression through the course objectives. All levels covered the same material and were designed to produce identical end results.

Each student had his own notebook which did not leave the laboratory. I completed and gave each student a "Program Outline". All you do is add the appropriate prescription numbers. For every project, I had a listing of prescriptions. Every prescription was prepared on six levels - from level one, which was college level material, through level five which was a totally mediated approach; and including level six which was left open as a "special" level for those students who did not fit into any of the other levels.

If a student demonstrated a predetermined level of mastery in any of the required areas, he did not have to do the required written work, but proceeded directly to any physical work which may be included. Using the resource material, the student completed the prescription. A large folder was provided on the instructor's desk which contained the answer sheets which the student used to correct his answers. A number at the top of each prescription

informed the student of the number he should get correct to obtain mastery of that prescription.

I initiated this program in 1968 and operated it until 1972 when I left to pursue my doctorate. At any one time, I had college level students working in the laboratory with "normal" students as well as special needs students. It was an inner city school, yet at the time I left, I had two teacher's aides to assist me with the program. The aides corrected all tests, and kept student personal records up to date. I had a darkroom in the laboratory for the media materials that I produced myself. A clearly numbered pidgeon-hole file held the over four-hundred prescriptions.

It is important to remember that individualized instruction is NOT every student working by himself. Rather, individualized instruction is tailoring learning events to suit every individual.

If a public school instructor wants to adapt his classroom - as I did - to an individualized approach, so that the special needs student would not be the ONLY student utilizing individualized instruction, then a series of questions are needed that the teacher can use to evaluate: 1)existing programs; 2) his personal teaching environment; and 3) the future direction of the program as he sees it. Figure 1 is a series of questions that I hope will help anyone interested in utilizing individualized instruction to meet the INTENT of the law for mainstreaming special needs students.

FIGURE 1

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR DETERMINING APPROPRIATE INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS FOR MAINSTREAMING SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS IN INDUSTRIAL ARTS

LEARNING PROGRAM DESIGN

1. How are students placed into the program?
2. How are examinations scored?
3. What diagnostic instruments are used?
4. What is the criteria for mastery?
5. Are objectives used?
6. Are all objectives reached by all students?
7. Are the objectives sequenced in a predetermined manner?
8. How does the program provide for individual differences?
9. What is the target audience of the program?
10. What are the subject areas of the program?
11. How is the program of study selected?
12. What size learning units are used in the program?
13. What types of media are employed?
14. What additional types of educational activities are used?
15. Does the program require the use of a computer?
16. What type of pacing is employed?
17. What kind of time restraints are employed?
18. How soon is feedback to the students?
19. What kinds of grades are used?
20. What type of report is used?

ORGANIZATIONAL PERSONNEL AND THEIR ROLES

1. What is the role of the teacher?
2. What is the role of the teacher aide?
3. Is student tutoring employed?
4. How is student attendance handled?
5. Are any additional personnel directly involved?

FACILITIES

1. Is a new facility required?
2. What is the estimated cost of the program?